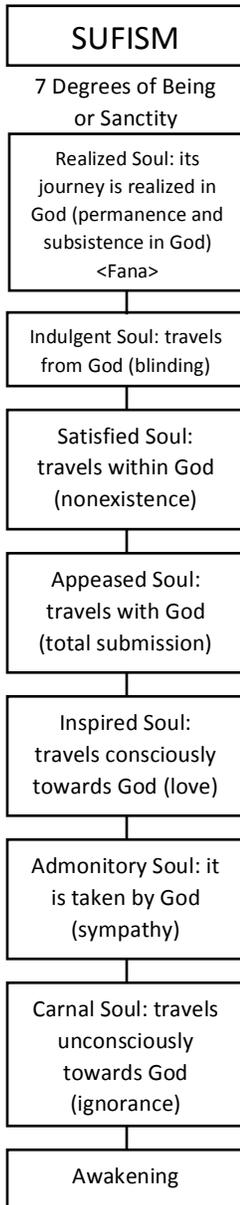


Awakening of spiritual awareness (Seven Degrees of Sainthood)

THEORY:



The seven degrees of being or of sainthood and its relation to the awakening of spiritual consciousness:

The Sufis, in their search for transparency and spiritual progress, have defined the path traveled by dividing it into seven degrees of progress. These seven degrees are:

1. Carnal soul: in this first stage man is overcome by his desires and passions. He is, in the literal sense of the word, a servant of his ego. However, since everything that exists goes to God, so does he, but unconsciously. He lives totally in a sensory universe and his state of being is ignorance.

2. Admonitory soul: in this second stage man becomes aware of his situation and judges it critically. Now, although his previous nature has not disappeared, his heart feels propelled in search of the higher and higher. In this stage it is said that man is taken by God and sympathy for spiritual matters is born in him.

3. Inspired soul: here, man puts his efforts into the practice of virtues. He feels inspired by God, he becomes patient, generous and seeks to expel the ignorance of his life. His way goes to God and he knows it; it is the journey over God and his state is love.

4. Appeased soul: finally, in this stage certainty is acquired. He no longer goes to God, but with God. He feels at peace with himself and nothing weighs on him anymore. He becomes generous, kind and forgives everything, ignoring the defects of others. He offers himself to others and to God, reaching the state of total submission.

5. Satisfied soul: spiritual maturity is reached here. The spiritual pilgrim now travels within God, knowing full acceptance and reaching the first level of union: the union of action. Its state of being is non-existence.

6. Indulgent soul: the union of action is now united with the union of essence. Man knows himself accepted by God, continuing his spiritual journey from God. He has completely unified the love of creation with love for the Creator, and his state of being is birth.

7. Realized soul: here the most complete and perfect spiritual maturity is achieved. He recognizes now, unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity, becoming a universal being with divine attributes. His journey is now made in God, realizing the supreme union and the consciousness of eternity. His state of being is permanence and subsistence in God.